



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

## 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting Opens in Kampala

*70 Countries Gather to Discuss AIDS Programming*

**Kampala, Uganda – June 4, 2008** - The 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting opened on June 3 in Kampala, drawing more than 1,700 HIV/AIDS implementers around the world. More than 70 countries are represented at the meeting, a testament to the global partnerships to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and a reflection of the conference theme, "Scaling Up Through Partnerships: Overcoming Obstacles to Implementation."

The Ethiopian delegation to the Kampala meeting, consisting of Ethiopian



*Ethiopia's PEPFAR implementing partners met in Addis Ababa to prepare for the Kampala meeting.*

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## Ethiopian Government and U.S. CJTF-HOA Dedicate Primary School Near Dire Dawa

**DIRE DAWA, Ethiopia** – Construction on the school's director and staff Service members from school began on October over a two-year period to Combined Joint Task 29, 2007, following a complete the project. Force – Horn of Africa 2006 request from Kelami The \$55,000 project included the construction of a four-classroom structure and a bathroom facility. Personnel from CJTF-HOA worked with community elders, the Regional Ministry of Education, Guryo-Samo General Thursday, June 5, 2008. Contractors, and the

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## Ethiopia Promotes Intellectual Property Throughout Society

**By Phillip Kurata**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Ethiopia has mobilized its media, schools, judicial and law enforcement agencies, as well as commercial, cultural, artistic and scientific groups to press home the need for intellectual property (IP) protection to develop the country's economy.

When the Ethiopian government grasped the importance of intellectual property rights as a development tool, it realized that a society-wide engagement was necessary, says Getachew Mengistie, the director-general of the Ethiopian Intel-

lectual Property Office.

Mengistie said that Ethiopian television and radio stations produced programs that ran for months to educate the public on the importance of intellectual property protection.

"The programs asked the question, 'is there a parent who does not want better education for his children?' The answer is 'no.' So, if we are for better education, that requires access to better books and educational materials. These are the fruits of our authors. If these materials are going to be pirated, authors will not be motivated to write them," Mengistie said.

As a result of media involvement, when the police and courts began taking actions against pirating and counterfeiting, the Ethiopian public supported them, he said.

The Ethiopian education ministry has integrated intellectual property protection into its curriculum for primary and secondary education to heighten citizens' appreciation for Ethiopian authors and inventors, according to Mengistie.

"Tomorrow's authors and inventors are today's primary school students," he said. "We should teach our students that our authors and inventors are our heroes." He said the curriculum will have a huge beneficial effect on Ethiopia's society and economy in 10 years to 20 years.

The director-general said Ethiopia has one of the great cultural treasures in the world, the Lalibela Church, which was carved from a

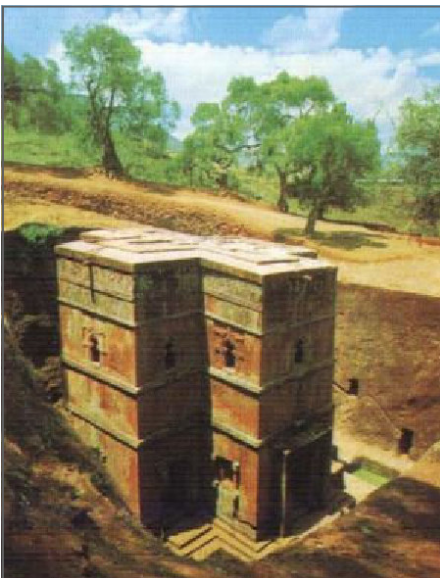
single block of stone. "This is the result of the human mind, so it is intellectual property. But we don't know who has done this. It's more than about business. It's about national culture and identity," Mengistie said.

With regard to the Ethiopian music industry, the association of recording companies agreed to lower the prices of compact discs of original recordings from \$15 to \$2.50, Mengistie said. The price reduction took away much of the incentive to produce pirated compact discs, which cost about \$1.10.

The 5,000 street vendors who sell CDs from push carts were brought into the broad educational campaign. "If we do not address the interests of these people, it would result in undesirable effects," Mengistie said. "They organized street vendors and gave them uniforms which say on the backs, 'Buy original, not pirated. Piracy kills creativity.'"

Protecting intellectual property has had a huge beneficial effect on the recording industry, according to Mengistie. In 2003, there were 50 Ethiopian recording companies. Now, there are 204. The number of musical works has risen, and the languages in which they are sung have broadened, notably in Amharic, Tigrigna and Romugna, the main Ethiopian dialects. The maximum amount of money that a musician could make from a recording in the pre-IP era was about \$45,000. Now, an artist can command a price of \$150,000 for a recording. "You can see the benefits of investment and employment that intellectual property has brought. This brings increased government revenue. It's

*(Continued on page 14)*



*Lalibela Church*

lectual Property Office.

"We concluded that piracy is not something that could be handled by the government alone," Mengistie said during a recent visit to Washington. He said the government formed a national intellectual property council consisting of government ministries, the media, and trade, as well as artistic, scientific,

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## 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting Opens . . .

*(Continued from page 1)*

and American government officials and of Ethiopian PEPFAR implementing partners, will present 17 abstracts to share Ethiopia's best practices and successes in combating HIV/AIDS. On May 29 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's State Minister of Health Dr. Kebede Worku and U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Deborah Malac opened a meeting of all Ethiopia PEPFAR partners, where the delegation previewed their presentations for the Kampala meeting.

H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, opened the meeting noting "I would like to salute the human race who have confronted AIDS and scored some achievements." He added, "Here in Uganda, we were able to analyze this sickness in the early years and came to the conclusion that it was stoppable."

"You, the global implementers of HIV/AIDS and your partners, have proven the skeptics wrong," said Ambassador Mark Dybul, PEPFAR Coordinator. "You knew what the skeptics did not – that seemingly ordinary people who appear to be without hope can do extraordinary things with a little support. As we step forward to meet the challenges before us, let's do so with even more enthusiasm and hope."

The meeting is being hosted by the Government of Uganda and co-sponsored by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

UNAIDS; UNICEF; the World Bank; the World Health Organization (WHO); and the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+).

"All partners present here in Kampala are driving a quiet revolution in the fight against AIDS," said Dr. Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Global Fund. "Through our collective work, millions of people have been reached with effective treatment and care and are alive today thanks to this effort. Prevention activities are helping millions more to avoid HIV infection. By sharing lessons and coordinating our work better, we will eventually be able to control this pandemic."

"In recent years, there has been significant progress and real results in scaling up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support," said Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS. "But for every two people starting treatment another five are newly infected with HIV. We must work in partnership to scale up this response, continuing to strengthen progress in treatment, as well as focusing attention upon the critical need to prevent new infections."

During the five-day conference, more than 200 abstracts will be presented by representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations including faith- and community-based groups, multilateral organizations, the private sector, and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS. Through presentations, dialogue and networking, participants will discuss critical barriers

and share information that will directly impact HIV/AIDS program implementation in the coming years.

"We already know some of the difficulties in bringing to scale the prevention strategies necessary to reach an AIDS-free generation, provide treatment for children who need it, and care for those who have lost parents to AIDS," said Jimmy Kolker, Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section at UNICEF. "But there are some outstanding examples of overcoming the obstacles and bottlenecks in order to reach our ambitious targets. By integrating services that benefit children and by acting together at the community as well as national level, we can ensure that children are no longer the invisible face of the HIV epidemic."

Recognizing the rapid expansion of HIV/AIDS programs worldwide, the focus of this year's meeting is on building the capacity of local HIV prevention, treatment, and care programs; enhancing program quality; and promoting coordination among partners.

An archived webcast of sessions from the meeting will be provided by [kaisernetwork.org](http://kaisernetwork.org), a free service of the Kaiser Family Foundation. The webcast and related online resources will be available following the meeting at: <http://www.kaisernetwork.org/hivimplementers2008>.

For more information on the meeting, please visit [www.hivimplementers.org](http://www.hivimplementers.org). ♦

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## Statement by President Bush on the Violence in Zimbabwe

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
June 2, 2008

### STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The continued use of government-sponsored violence in Zimbabwe, including unwarranted arrests and intimidation of opposition figures, to prevent the Movement for Democratic Change from campaigning freely ahead of the June 27 presidential runoff election is deplorable. We call on the regime to immediately halt all attacks and to permit freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and access to the media. We urge the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, the United Nations, and other international organizations to blanket the country with election

and human rights monitors immediately.

We also are concerned by reports that misguided government policies are projected to result in one of the worst crop harvests in Zimbabwean history. While Robert Mugabe makes political statements in Rome, his people continue to face empty markets at home. The United States currently feeds more than 1 million Zimbabweans and spent more than \$170 million on food assistance in Zimbabwe last year. We will continue these efforts to prevent government-induced starvation in Zimbabwe.

*(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*



*U.S. President George W. Bush*

## Ethiopian Government and U.S. CJTF-HOA Dedicate Primary . . .

*(Continued from page 1)*

ing the enrollment in Kelami by one-third. The newly constructed school supports educational opportunities for the community's children, enabling more students to learn while enjoying better sanitary conditions.

The service members of CJTF-HOA, headquartered in Djibouti, focus on military-to-military training, civil-military operations and senior leader

outreach engagements. The Task Force's Civil Affairs teams -- like the one working today at Kelami Primary School -- contribute to United States Government efforts to promote a better tomorrow for all Ethiopians through short-term projects to support clean water, functional schools, better roadways and improved medical facilities. CJTF-HOA's development projects contribute to its overall mission: to conduct unified action with local

military forces and government representatives in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region to prevent conflict, promote regional stability, and protect the region from extremist activities. ♦



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## Nations with Influence on Zimbabwe Must Use Maximum Leverage

**By Stephen Kaufman**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- With less than one month before Zimbabwe's presidential runoff election, the United States is calling on neighboring states, such as South Africa, to use their influence to exercise "the maximum amount of leverage" on the government of President Robert Mugabe in the wake of violence and intimidation against the political opposition.

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said June 4 that Morgan Tsvangirai, who faces Mugabe in the June 27 runoff, was detained by government forces in the town of Lupane. Tsvangirai was released after eight hours of detention and was not charged with any crime.

Prior to his release, McCormack said the opposition leader "should be released immediately unharmed, [and] untouched," describing the detention as "deeply disturbing" and recalling that Tsvangirai had been beaten while in police custody in March 2007. (See "Rice Calls for Release of Zimbabwean Opposition Leaders ( <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/March/20070313165438esnamfua00.0741846.html> ).")

Tsvangirai's party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has seen four other party leaders arrested ahead of the runoff vote, and the party claims that 58 of its supporters have been killed by pro-government forces since the March 29 presidential and parliamentary vote.

According to an MDC chairman, two Tsvangirai supporters were burned to death by suspected sup-

porters of the ruling ZANU-PF party June 4 in Masvingo province.

### CONCERTED EFFORT NEEDED TO ENCOURAGE CHANGE IN ZIMBABWE

McCormack said the United States has imposed tough sanctions against Zimbabwe's leadership that are targeted "in a way that would not, we hope, affect the Zimbab-



*Morgan Tsvangirai*

wean people in a negative way." However, the Bush administration and others in the international community are "simply up against ... the hard facts of international politics" regarding the situation in Zimbabwe.

"When you are faced with situations like this, it's a matter of politics. It's a matter of leverage and trying to create that leverage and trying to get those who have it to use it," he said. "And states like South Africa, for example, need to use the leverage that they have."

South Africa is not the only country with leverage over Mugabe's government, but Pretoria is "uniquely

positioned" to encourage a change in behavior, McCormack said.

The United States and other individual countries can levy sanctions, "but unless you have a truly concerted, focused effort to put in place sanctions and enforce them, leadership of this kind is going to find a way around those things to relieve the pressure," he said.

A senior State Department official told reporters June 4 that the United States wants to see election observers in place for the June 27 runoff vote, as well as a "truly independent" election commission and provision by the military of "a secure atmosphere where everybody can vote."

The official called for international financial assistance for the election observers, saying there is likely a good supply of individuals in the region and the international community, but they may need additional resources to help them do their jobs.

Although the Bush administration is hoping for a free and fair vote, "certainly there's a healthy suspicion that Mugabe would do everything he could to stay in power," based on previous behavior.

"We need to be prepared for a variety of different outcomes," the official said. "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best."

At the White House, press secretary Dana Perino said June 4 that Zimbabwe's decision to ban the activities of CARE International, Save the Children and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) showed the government's

*(Continued on page 28)*

## Madagascar's Women "Wake Up" to Their Rights

**By Jane Morse**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Mathilde Rabary, the women of Madagascar are "waking up" to their rights.

Rabary is a passionate advocate for women's rights and human rights. She is the president of the nationwide nongovernmental organization S.O.S. to Human Rights Victims, which was created in 1999 to assist victims of human rights abuses in Madagascar. S.O.S. also works to educate citizens of this island nation in the Indian Ocean about their rights.

In 2003, in collaboration with women law graduates in the city of Fianarantsoa, S.O.S. opened Madagascar's first legal clinic that counsels primarily women. Named Mifohaza (Wake Up), the clinic educates women about their inheritance, family, domestic and work rights. The clinic, which handles more than 2,000 cases per year, is a proven success in a country plagued by corruption and a weak judiciary system.

Rabary and her legal experts also travel around the country to raise public awareness of human rights and to handle cases involving domestic violence, land issues, torture under interrogation and other issues.

Rabary has fought for human rights both inside and outside

Madagascar's government. She has taught human rights at Madagascar's School of Nursing and Midwifery since 1995, and from 1994 to 1996 worked as the director of well-being of families and children at the Ministry of Population. From

1998 to 2002, she was a member of the National Assembly.

In 2002, she took her fight to protect human rights to the international level by filing a lawsuit with the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights against violations of human rights in Madagascar.

The U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized her work. In the same year, Rabary initiated the first international colloquium on human rights in the Indian Ocean region.

She spoke in Geneva in 2004 before the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination about racial intolerance in Madagascar. In 2007, she represented Malagasy civil society before the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights on the issue of torture in Madagascar.

Rabary was nominated for the U.S. Secretary of State's 2008 Women of Courage Award. The award, founded in 2007 by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, celebrates exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and advancement.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)* ♦



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## Presidential Campaign Enters New Phase as Primaries End

**By Michelle Austein**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- As the final Democratic primary voters cast ballots in South Dakota and Montana June 3, Illinois Senator Barack Obama told his supporters that, "because of you," he is expected to become the first African-American presidential nominee of a major political party.

"Tonight, after 54 hard-fought contests, our primary season has finally come to an end. ... Thousands of miles have been traveled. Millions of voices have been heard. And because of what you said, because you decided that change must come to Washington ... tonight we mark the end of one historic journey with the beginning of another, a journey that will bring a new and better day to America," Obama said.

Neither Democratic candidate has earned enough pledged delegates to guarantee the nomination, but U.S. news media outlets are calling Obama the presumed Democratic nominee because enough superdelegates -- party leaders who cast votes -- have indicated they will vote for Obama at the Democratic National Convention in Denver this August. If those superdelegates vote in line with their announced intentions, Obama will have more than the 2,118 votes needed to earn the nomination.

Obama congratulated New York Senator Hillary Clinton on her campaign, saying she will continue to play an influential role in shaping policy. "Our party and our country are better off because of her, and I am a better candidate for having had the honor to compete with Hillary Rodham Clinton," he said.

Speaking at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, Minnesota, the same place where John McCain officially will be named the Republican nominee at his party's convention in September, Obama highlighted how his views differ from those of his presumed general-election opponent. Obama focused on the war in Iraq, the economy and energy issues, saying that McCain would continue to promote failed policies.



*'Senator Obama has inspired so many Americans to care about politics and empowered so many more to get involved,' Clinton said, 'and our party and our democracy is stronger and more vibrant as a result.'*

Speaking in her home state of New York, Clinton congratulated Obama for his "extraordinary campaign," but did not concede the race.

"Senator Obama has inspired so many Americans to care about politics and empowered so many more to get involved," Clinton said, "and our party and our democracy is stronger and more vibrant as a result."

Clinton said she is "committed to uniting our party so we move forward stronger and more ready than ever to take back the White House this November," but added she would be "making no decisions tonight" about her plans.

"In the coming days, I'll be consulting with supporters and party leaders to determine how to move forward with the best interests of our party and our country guiding my way," the first viable female U.S. presidential candidate said.

There was one good piece of news for Clinton: She won the South Dakota primary. Her victory there was a surprise to many because Obama had won prior nominating contests in neighboring states. Obama won Montana's primary.

Also on June 3, the presumed Republican nominee praised Clinton in a speech in Kenner, Louisiana.

"Senator Clinton has earned great respect for her tenacity and courage," McCain said. "As the father of three daughters, I owe her a debt for inspiring millions of women to believe there is no opportunity in this great country beyond their reach. I am proud to call her my friend."

Knowing that many Americans -- particularly Democrats -- would be watching the Democratic candidates speak on television on the evening of their final contests, McCain used the opportunity to address voters across the country as well.

Saying that the "general election has begun," McCain criticized Obama's claim that the Arizona

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## Democrats Reach Compromise Plan for Michigan, Florida Delegates

**By Michelle Austein**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- After hours of debate in a Washington hotel May 31, members of the Democratic National Committee's (DNC's) bylaws and rules committee approved a plan to give Michigan and Florida's delegates half a vote each.

In the fall of 2007, the DNC said it would not count Florida and Michigan's pledged delegates because the states violated party rules by scheduling their primaries prior to February 5. All Democratic presidential candidates agreed not to campaign in those states, and Barack Obama and most other Democratic candidates removed their names from the Michigan ballot.

But, because the Democratic contest remains close, party members encouraged the DNC to review this decision.

Hillary Clinton, who earned the most votes in both states' primaries, argued that those voters deserve to have their voices heard. Obama said it was unfair to count those delegates because candidates did not campaign in those states. Supporters of both candidates feared that barring Florida's and Michigan's delegate votes would prompt angry voters in those states to support Republican John McCain.

The rules committee meeting, broadcast live on some cable news channels, sometimes was contentious, as representatives for both Clinton and Obama argued their proposals for counting the dele-

gates. Protesters outside the meeting made their opinions known as well.

The committee members voted to allow the entire Michigan and Florida delegations to participate in the convention, but each delegate -- pledged and unpledged -- will cast half a vote. The committee's action



*Hillary Clinton was campaigning in Puerto Rico on Saturday*

affects the votes of the entire delegation, not just the delegates selected through the primary.

That action changes the nomination math: There are now 4,234 delegate votes available, with a majority of 2,118 needed to earn the nomination. The addition of Michigan and Florida delegates earned Clinton 87 delegates and Obama 63.

In Florida, delegates will cast 92.5 pledged votes, split amongst the candidates based on the percentage

of the vote each candidate earned in the January 29 primary.

Determining how to allocate votes within the Michigan delegation was more complex because Obama's name did not appear on the state's ballot. Clinton earned 55 percent of the vote in the January 15 primary, while 40 percent voted for "uncommitted." With no major candidates but Clinton on the ballot, it is impossible to know what percentage of the uncommitted voters would have voted for Obama.

Clinton's campaign maintained she deserved 55 percent of the delegates, with the others going to "uncommitted." Obama's campaign argued the delegates should be split evenly between the two. The rules committee found middle ground: Clinton will receive 34.5 pledged delegates, while Obama will get 29.5 delegates.

The Michigan decision angered some Clinton supporters. "The committee awarded to Senator Obama not only the delegates won by uncommitted, but four of the delegates won by Senator Clinton. This decision violates the bedrock principles of our democracy and our party," campaign staff members Harold Ickes and Tina Flournoy said in a statement.

"We reserve the right to challenge this decision before the credentials committee and appeal for a fair allocation of Michigan's delegates that actually reflect the votes as they were cast."

The credentials committee meets on the first day of the Democratic Na-

*(Continued on page 10)*



## The Path to the 2008 Presidential Nomination

**Washington** -- After hours of debate in a Washington hotel May 31, members of the Democratic National Committee's (DNC's) bylaws and rules committee approved a plan to give Michigan and Florida's delegates -- both pledged and unpledged -- half a vote each.

There are now 4,234 delegate votes available, with a majority of 2,118 needed to earn the nomination, as opposed to the previous 2,026.

Initially, the DNC said it would not count pledged delegates from Florida and Michigan because the states violated party rules by scheduling their primaries prior to February 5. All Democratic presidential candidates agreed not to campaign in those states, and Barack Obama and most other Democratic candidates removed their names from the Michigan ballot. But mounting pressure from party members resulted in the DNC revising this decision.

In Florida, delegates will cast 92.5 pledged votes, split among the candidates based on the percentage of the vote each candidate earned in the January 29 primary.

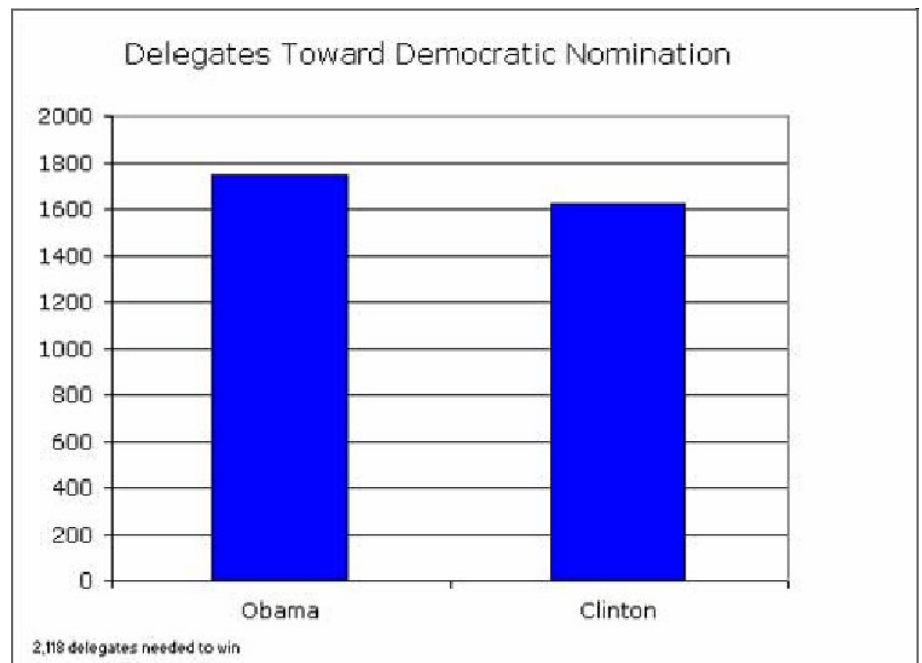
Allocating votes within the Michigan delegation was more complex because Obama's name did not appear on the state's ballot. Hillary Clinton earned 55 percent of the vote in the January 19 primary while 40 percent voted for "uncommitted." The rules committee decided Clinton will receive 34.5 pledged delegates while Obama will get 29.5 delegates.

For more on the Florida and Michigan decision, see "Democrats Reach Compromise Plan for Michi-

gan, Florida Delegates." ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/June/20080602123444abretnuh0.1137049.html?CP.rss=true> )

The addition of Michigan and Florida's delegates earned Clinton 87 delegates and Obama 63. Clinton earned another 38 pledged delegates from her victory in Puerto Rico's June 1 primary. Clinton earned 68 percent of the vote, but

With just 31 pledged delegates left to award in the June 3 South Dakota and Montana primaries, neither candidate will be able to secure the nomination with pledged delegates alone. Attention then turns to the 823.5 party leaders, the so-called superdelegates, who are not pledged, or bound, to vote for a particular candidate. (See "Superdelegates May Decide Democratic Nominee" ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08->



because the Democratic Party awards pledged delegates proportionally, Obama received 17 pledged delegates.

According to the Green Papers, an organization that tracks the awarding of delegates, Obama has 1,740.5 pledged delegates of the 2,118 delegates needed to earn the Democratic Party's nomination. Clinton has 1,624.5 pledged delegates. (Democrats Abroad, some U.S. territories and Michigan and Florida award delegates in half-vote increments.)

english/2008/February/20080204190330hmnietua0.9187281.html ).")

Currently 328.5 superdelegates say they intend to vote for Obama, while 290 favor Clinton. By including these superdelegates in the tallies, Obama has 2069 delegates, 49 delegates shy of the nomination.

On the Republican side, Arizona Senator John McCain has earned the 1,191 pledged delegates he

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## Democrats Reach Compromise Plan for Michigan, . . .

*(Continued from page 8)*

tional Convention in Denver August 25 and makes the final decision on seating delegates. The statement from the Clinton camp hinted that the New York senator might stay in the race until the convention.

According to the Green Papers, an organization that tracks the awarding of delegates, as of the evening of June 1, Obama had 1,740.5 pledged delegates while Clinton had 1,624.5 pledged delegates. With just 31 pledged delegates left to award in the June 3 South Dakota and Montana primaries, neither candidate will be able to secure the nomination with pledged delegates alone.

This means that votes of superdelegates -- unpledged party leaders and elected officials -- will determine the party's nominee. Currently, 328.5 superdelegates say they intend to vote for Obama, while 290 favor Clinton. If these superdelegates are included in the tallies, Obama has 2069 delegates, 49 delegates shy of the nomination.

### CLINTON WINS PUERTO RICO PRIMARY BY LARGE MARGIN

Voters on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, the largest U.S. territory, participated in a unique Democratic primary June 1. Puerto Ricans, who can vote in the presidential primaries but not the general election, had the rare opportunity to hear directly from the candidates as both Clinton and Obama campaigned on the island, where Spanish is the dominant language.

Clinton won the Puerto Rico primary with 69 percent of the vote. Despite this, political experts say

Obama is more likely to win the nomination because he has more pledged delegates and superdelegate endorsements. Obama also is favored to win the South Dakota and Montana primaries.

In her speech in San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 1, Clinton emphasized the race will not end with the final state nominating contests.

"When the voting concludes on Tuesday, neither Senator Obama nor I will have the number of delegates to be the nominee," Clinton said.

"The decision will fall on the shoulders of those leaders in our party empowered by the rules to vote at the Democratic convention," Clinton said, referring to the superdelegates.

Addressing them, she said: "I do not envy the decision you must make, but the decision has to be made, and in the final assessment I ask you to answer these questions: Which candidate best represents the will of the people who voted in this historic primary? Which candidate is best able to lead us to victory in November? And which can-

didate is best able to lead our nation as our president?"



*Committee members voted after three hours of talks*

Speaking in front of the Mitchell, South Dakota, Corn Palace, Obama congratulated Clinton on her win, saying she will be "a great asset when we go into November to make sure that we defeat the Republicans."

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*

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## Reducing Demand Is Key To Curbing Human Trafficking, U.S. Says

**By Jane Morse**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The demand for cheap labor and sexual services must be addressed to end human trafficking and modern-day slavery, say U.S. officials.

At a June 4 briefing for the release of the State Department's eighth annual Trafficking In Persons Report, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the 2008 report, for the first time, examines prosecution data.

She cited one "disturbing discovery" in particular: "Although more countries are addressing sex trafficking through prosecution and convictions, the petty tyrants who exploit their laborers rarely receive serious punishment. We see this as a serious shortcoming, and as we move our efforts forward, we and our allies must remember that a robust law enforcement response is essential."

Ambassador Mark Lagon, the director of the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, said the 2008 report also focuses on forced labor, a form of trafficking in persons.

Lagon recounted instances of workers imprisoned in factories under brutal conditions that could be categorized only as forced labor. Evidence of forced labor is especially strong in Thailand's shrimp-processing industry, he said, and in charcoal production and on sugar plantations in Brazil.

In addition to slave labor in factories, many trafficking victims find themselves enslaved as domestic servants. Lagon said the govern-

ment of the Philippines has taken steps to prevent workers from accepting domestic employment in certain countries where such enslavement is prevalent. Lagon called on more governments around the world to exercise stronger political will to prevent trafficking.

Lagon said the 2008 report takes a close look at the factors that create demand and at the recruiters of trafficked victims. Such recruiters often establish fees for finding "work" for their "clients" that are so onerous the result is debt bondage. Debt bondage is a form of enslavement in which workers find they never can pay off their debts to win their freedom or the right to keep their wages.

The ambassador also called for more services for the treatment and rehabilitation of the formerly enslaved. "We must restore humanity to those who have been dehumanized," he said.

The 2008 report evaluates the efforts of 170 countries to combat human trafficking. The report aims to raise awareness of the scourge of modern slavery and to encourage countries to take action to prevent it.

The report places countries in "tiers" based on an assessment of the government's compliance with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking as explained in the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Protection Act of 2000. Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries have moderate to severe challenges in controlling trafficking. Another category, "Tier 2 Watch List," indicates countries in danger of falling to the bottom Tier 3.

Lagon said that in the 2008 report, Madagascar moved to Tier 1 -- the best of the ratings -- by demonstrating the ability to take effective anti-trafficking steps with minimal resources. Moldova, however, fell to Tier 3. Both previously had been classified in Tier 2.

China and India remain on the Tier 2 Watch List. China, he said, has made insufficient efforts to combat trafficking, especially in regards to North Korean women who are trafficked into China as "wives" or prostitutes. Those North Koreans unlucky enough to be returned by authorities to North Korea routinely are punished by the North Korean regime, he said.

In contrast, India has made more efforts to protect children who become victims of trafficking, but the government still does not recognize bonded labor as a form of slavery, Lagon said.

### TRAFFICKING A WORLDWIDE PROBLEM

According to U.S. estimates, some 800,000 people are trafficked across national borders each year. That number does not include the millions of people trafficked within their own countries.

Trafficking is a problem in the United States as well, where an estimated 14,500 to 17,500 victims are trafficked into the country each year. A separate report on trafficking problems inside the United States is produced each year.

U.S. efforts to combat trafficking involve partnerships with other countries, international and nongov-

*(Continued on page 20)*

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## Presidential Campaign Enters New Phase as . . .

*(Continued from page 7)*

senator is "running for President Bush's third term."

Citing differences between himself and Bush, McCain said, "[The American people] know I have a long record of bipartisan problem solving. They've seen me put our country before any president, before any party, before any special interest, before my own interest."

Speaking an hour after McCain, Obama again made this claim about the presumed Republican nominee. But he also noted that Republicans "offer a very different set of policies and positions, and that is a de-

bate I look forward to" having as the general election now begins in earnest.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*



*Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton at a rally in New York.*

## The Path to the 2008 Presidential . . .

*(Continued from page 9)*

needs to be the party's presidential nominee. However, he will not become the official Republican Party nominee until his party's delegates cast their votes at the Republican National Convention in September.

### THE NOMINATION PROCESS

To become a party's nominee for president, a candidate must win the support of a majority of delegates to the party's national convention in the summer of 2008. For whom those delegates will cast their votes is determined by the outcomes of state caucuses and primaries. Convention delegates are divided among states proportionally.

Delegates are "pledged" (or committed) to candidates based on the

votes the candidate receives in a state's primary or caucus. Each party in each state has its own guidelines for awarding delegates. However, all Democratic contests must use some form of proportional representation. Many states' Republican parties award all of their delegates to the candidate who receives the most votes.

Some states' party leaders also select a few "unpledged" delegates, and these delegates can vote for any candidate. A candidate must receive a majority of convention votes to secure the party's nomination. If multiple rounds of voting at the convention are required to select a candidate -- something that has not occurred in recent election cycles -- most states allow delegates to change their votes after the first round of voting.

Democrats are slated to select 4,234 delegates, so a candidate would need to receive a majority of 2,118 votes to win the nomination.

Republicans will elect at least 2,380 delegates. The party punished Wyoming, New Hampshire, Michigan, Florida and South Carolina for scheduling their primaries before February 5. These states will only have half their delegates counted.

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## Americans Feeling Effects of Higher Oil, Gas Prices

**By Michelle Austein**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Memorial Day, celebrated by Americans on the last Monday of May, marks the unofficial beginning of summer and, for many, the beginning of travel season.

As schools let out for summer, many American families take vacations and most drive to their destinations. The American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates 31.7 million Americans will travel 80 kilometers or more from home over the May 24-May 26 holiday weekend.

But that number is down from 2007: With gas prices at a record high, many Americans are rethinking their travel plans. AAA predicts fewer Americans will travel this Memorial Day weekend compared to last year -- the first decrease in travel since shortly after the September 11 attacks.

The high price of gas affects both road and air travel. With the cost of oil rising as high as \$135 per barrel, airlines face significantly increased costs for jet fuel and have hiked fares while cutting service.

High gas and oil prices are affecting Americans' pocketbooks in other ways as well.

AAA estimates that the cost of regular gas is \$3.80 a gallon, 19 percent higher than in May 2007 and four times as high as five years ago. The cost of a gallon of diesel fuel, used to run most trucks, is \$4.54 a gallon. As it becomes increasingly expensive to fill a truck's tank, the cost of transporting goods, particularly food, to markets also jumps. This means that as

Americans pay more for gas they also are paying more for groceries.

Voters are looking to candidates running for all levels of office for solutions to curb rising gas and food prices.

The presidential candidates, talking to voters concerned about both the future of the economy and the environment, have proposed a number of short- and long-term solutions to lessen the effect of high gas prices.

Both Senator John McCain, the presumed Republican nominee and Democratic Senator Hillary Clinton, in the race for the Democratic nomination, have said that Americans would get some relief if the 18.4 cents-per-gallon federal gas tax is suspended during the summer travel season.



Opponents of such a suspension, including Senator Barack Obama, the front-runner for the Democratic nomination, say lifting the federal gas tax will save Americans very little money. Obama, who has accused McCain and Clinton of supporting the gas suspension for po-

litical purposes, says the plan would save each American only a few dollars at the cost of reducing the funds needed to repair roads.

Each of the presidential candidates has proposed different ways of reducing American's reliance on foreign oil, which now is about 60 percent of oil used in the United States. These proposals include ways of encouraging companies to develop alternative fuels that would both reduce use of oil and help the environment. (See "Candidates on the Issues: Climate Change ( <http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/issues.html#climate> ).")

### **POLITICIANS DEBATE POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS**

With voters frustrated about gas prices, the Senate and House judi-

ary committees asked executives from the top American oil companies to provide their explanation for the high costs. The executives said the main cause is that global demand for oil is rising while supply remains limited.

*(Continued on page 28)*

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## Black Music Month, 2008: A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

America's diverse musical heritage exemplifies the creativity and optimism of our Nation. During Black Music Month, we celebrate the extraordinary talents and creativity of African-American singers, musicians, and composers whose achievements have enriched our culture and enhanced our lives.

For generations, African-American artists have created music that communicates across racial boundaries and expresses both joy and sorrow. When facing the cruelty of slavery and injustice, African Americans lifted spirituals to the heavens, bringing comfort to troubled souls. These timeless declarations of hope and faith evolved into the more modern genres of gospel, blues, ragtime, and jazz, and they are given voice in the musical genius of Scott Joplin,

Marian Anderson, Eubie Blake, and Mahalia Jackson. During the Civil Rights era, African-American musicians such as Duke Ellington, Muddy Waters, and Ruth Brown conveyed the struggles of their communities while bringing people of all backgrounds together. Today, this music continues to inspire America's citizens and advance its creative spirit.

Throughout the course of American history, black musicians have used their great talents to share the richness of the African-American experience and to develop a uniquely American style of music enjoyed throughout the world. This month, we honor the pioneers of African-American music and today's contemporary artists who have enriched the lives of people everywhere.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2008 as Black Music Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history of black music and to enjoy the great contributions of African-American singers, musicians, and composers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH♦

## Ethiopia Promotes Intellectual Property Throughout . . .

*(Continued from page 2)*

big," Mengistie said.

The policies have had an equally astonishing effect in nurturing the Ethiopian film industry. Filmmaking was nonexistent before 2003, but today, as if a magical wand has been waved, producers make two to three films a month.

"There is a big potential for this industry. This is for the domestic market, but there is a big Ethiopian diaspora in Europe, Africa and the United States. If we can find a mechanism to tap those markets, you can see where the creative industries will be in the future," Mengistie said.

Patents for industrial design have enabled Ethiopia to start developing a local manufacturing base and ease its reliance on imported goods. One example is the shoemaking industry, which has come into being during the past several years. Until a few years ago, Ethiopia's shoes were imported from Kenya, India or China. Now, as a result of patent protections, local manufacturers are producing shoes in greater variety and quality and at lower prices than what was available from importers.

A similar process is under way for traditional Ethiopian medicine, most of which has no written tradition. Traditional doctors are having their

remedies tested and analyzed by Western-trained medical researchers. If the remedies are found to be effective, they are patented in the name of the traditional doctors and pharmaceutical companies, and the patent holders receive royalties on the sales.

"Traditional doctors are willing to share their knowledge provided that their rights are recognized and they are able to profit from their knowledge," Mengistie said.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*

## World Leaders Begin Debate on Crop Use for Biofuels, Food

**By Kathryn McConnell**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The relation of bio-fuel production to the rising cost of food is expected to be a major point of discussion at a June 3-5 United Nations summit in Rome on world food security.



*A handful of corn is shown before it's processed into ethanol at a plant in Iowa in 2006. This new "green" fuel has been touted as an alternative to gasoline and a way to combat global warming.  
File photo by Charlie Neibergall, AP*

At a briefing in Rome with international reporters on the eve of the summit, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer took an early stance on behalf of his country, saying just 2 percent to 3 percent of the recent increase in food prices is due to biofuel production. Some others say biofuel production accounts for as much as 33 percent of the increase in food prices.

Schafer said he hopes the summit's biofuel discussions lead to some conclusions about the efficiencies of biofuels.

He said, for instance, that U.S. bio-fuel production has reduced by 1 million barrels a day the use of oil,

which is itself at record-high prices. Furthermore, increased use of bio-fuel and less of oil is better for the environment, he said.

Biofuel-production technology has become more efficient, according to Schafer, who cited improved methods of producing ethanol by fermenting crop residues.

Schafer, who is leading the U.S. delegation in Rome, listed factors he said are driving the rise in food prices: increased worldwide consumption, which has led to reduced food stocks; rising energy costs; and trade barriers.

He said countries with export restrictions designed to protect their own short-term food security are making the situation worse by removing food from global markets, driving up prices and discouraging farmers from producing according to market signals.

Addressing the issue of trade restrictions, Robert Zoellick, president of the World Bank, urged countries immediately to lift restrictions and taxes on food purchases and for transportation of humanitarian food shipments to countries most in need, according to a June 3 press release.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated that food prices will increase approximately 43 percent in 2008.

But, Schafer said, favorable weather so far in 2008 in major areas of the world that produce wheat, rice and soybeans is expected to boost production significantly, which will contribute to food-price stabilization.

Approximately 40 heads of state and other government officials are expected to attend the meeting in Rome.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*



*Ohio Department of Agriculture fuel station in 2006. 85% ethanol and 15% petroleum.  
File photo by Kiichiro Sato, AP*

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## Global Grain Production Expected to Increase in 2008

**By Kathryn McConnell**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Global agricultural commodity production is expected to increase 2.6 percent to a record level in 2008, but the forecast depends on favorable weather.

Yet near-term commodity prices are expected to remain high as the result of a combination of pressures on world food markets. Those include the expanding needs of a steadily growing world population, strong demand by growing middle classes for more meat and dairy foods and protective export restrictions by some grain-producing countries.

Other pressures are demand for grain for use in biofuel production and higher agricultural production and marketing costs linked to higher energy prices.

Prices for grains and oilseeds rose sharply in 2007 and have surged in early 2008, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) reported in May. World prices for major agricultural commodities were up 46 percent in April 2008 compared to a year earlier, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer said at a May 19 press briefing.

The expected continuing high commodity prices will put additional strain on households that spend a large proportion of their incomes on food. Also feeling the pinch will be livestock farmers and food processors, CRS said. Farmers rely on grains for livestock feed; food processors rely on corn as a major sweetener ingredient.

In May, international prices of rice continued to rise but at a slower

pace than at the beginning of 2008. After reaching highs in March, wheat prices began to slide in April and declined further in May as wheat-growing regions around the world experienced early favorable weather, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported May 15. Maize prices remained at record high levels.

Markets have not seen such strong demand for grains and oilseeds and such high prices since the 1990s, CRS reports.

The increasing cost of food is "weakening the ability of governments of both poor and middle-income countries to sustain growth, protect the vulnerable or even to maintain order," Henrietta Fore told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee May 14. Fore is the administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Unfavorable weather during the 2007 growing season in several major cereal-exporting nations resulted in reduced harvests, contributing to a steady rise in world prices, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) researcher Ronald Trostle said in a May USDA report on global agricultural supply and demand. Cereals include wheat, rice, maize, sorghum, millet and other food grains.

Poor weather during 2008 would prolong the current tight supply situation, contribute to price surges and strain countries already facing economic hardship, FAO said in its April crop report.

### FOOD AND FUEL DEBATE

Food and fuel prices "have become increasingly intertwined," said

Joachim von Braun of the Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute.

Higher oil prices have made agricultural production more expensive by raising the costs of fertilizer, irrigation and transportation of farm supplies and harvests, von Braun said.

This is causing farmers in developing countries not to plant as much as they once did, Josette Sheeran, executive director of the U.N. World Food Programme, said in an interview published in April by Foreign Policy magazine.

Schafer discounted the theory that growing demand for biofuels is a major cause of higher food prices.

He said that only 3 percent of the increase in world food prices since 2007 is due to the increased demand for ethanol, an alternative fuel often made from corn.

Overlooked, Schafer said, is that record-high oil prices may go up further. "So developing diversity in our portfolio of fuels is, if anything, an even more urgent matter than it has been in the past," he said.

In the United States, grain used for ethanol production is projected to increase 33 percent in 2008 following a 50 percent increase from 2006 to 2007, Joe Glauber of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) told reporters at the press briefing.

Von Braun said in a May 16 press statement that governments should revoke biofuel subsidies and requirements that a certain percentage of ethanol be used in gasoline.

*(Continued on page 20)*



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## Multiple Factors Drive Up Global Food Prices

**By Phillip Kurata**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- The price of rice has more than tripled since early 2006, while prices for wheat, corn and soybeans have more than doubled, triggering food riots and threatening to plunge more than 100 million people into deeper hunger and poverty.

Charles Hanrahan, a senior specialist in agricultural policy at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), sees five factors driving up the price of food.

The first is weather, with droughts in Australia and Eastern Europe and poor weather in Canada, Western Europe and Ukraine resulting in reduced supplies of grain.

"As a result of adverse weather conditions, global stocks of corn, wheat and soybeans are at historically low levels," Hanrahan said in an interview with *America.gov*. His findings are contained in a CRS report for Congress, *Rising Food Prices and Global Food Needs: The U.S. Response*.

Battling its worst drought in a century, Australia has seen its rice production drop by 98 percent of the pre-drought level. As for wheat, Australia produces up to 25 million tons in a good year, most of which is exported. Historically, it is the second largest wheat exporter after the United States. Australian wheat production fell to less than 10 million tons in 2006 but recovered to 13 million tons in 2007, about 40 percent below its five-year average, according to the Aus-

tralian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Hanrahan said it is unclear whether the abnormal growing conditions are a one-time occurrence or part of long-term climate change.

Export restrictions introduced in countries around the world -- but especially in Asian rice-producing countries -- also contribute to the current problems.

"Some countries have introduced grain export restrictions to augment



*Cambodian children in Kampong Speu province eat rice during a school breakfast supported by the World Food Program. (© AP Images)*

domestic supplies and hopefully contain the effects of high prices on their own consumers," Hanrahan said. "However, such measures exacerbate the food-supply situation in importing countries."

India has imposed tight restrictions on non-basmati rice exports, and Vietnam banned exports of rice. Thailand, the world's biggest rice exporter, is expected to export a record amount this year as prices rise to unprecedented levels. The price of Thai rice has tripled since January and now stands above \$1,000 a ton.

The third factor Hanrahan cited is rising oil and energy prices that have affected all levels of the food production and marketing chain, from fertilizer costs to harvesting, transporting and processing food.

In 2007, when the cost of oil averaged \$72 per barrel, more than half of every dollar the United States provided in food aid was consumed by transportation costs. In 2008, transportation costs will surge much higher, following the trend of oil and gas prices. The price of fertilizer has risen steeply, in some cases doubling between October 2007 and April 2008.

"Oil prices are not likely to fall much in the medium term," Hanrahan said. "That will affect the cost of producing and marketing food in every respect."

The fourth factor -- higher incomes in emerging markets like China and India -- has resulted in strong demand for food commodities, meat and processed foods and higher prices in world markets.

"Both [countries] are increasing their consumption of meat, and they need corn and other feed grains. That's a long-term, underlying structural factor in the demand for commodities that will not change radically," Hanrahan said. It takes 7 kilos of grain to produce 1 kilo of meat. China, once a major grain exporter, has become an importer of grain.

The final factor is the increased de-

*(Continued on page 22)*

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## U.S. Officials to Urge Increased Agriculture Development Aid

**By Kathryn McConnell**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Top U.S. officials attending a United Nations conference addressing the global food crisis will call for more agricultural development assistance to countries most able to increase food production rapidly. The United States also will call for increased research in agricultural technologies, said U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer, who will lead the U.S. delegation.

More than 40 heads of state are expected to attend the meeting June 3-5 in Rome.

The United States also will call for an immediate and expanded international response to aid countries most vulnerable to hunger, Schaffer said in a May 29 briefing with reporters.

Other members of the U.S. delegation include U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Henrietta Fore and Agriculture Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Mark Keenum.

The conference called by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization aims "to help countries devise sustainable solutions to rising food prices and the new challenges of climate change and energy security," Schafer said in a press release.

### SIDE EVENTS

Schafer and Fore also will participate in three conference side events, Fore told America.gov.

One event, hosted by the United States, will showcase developing countries that have used biotechnology to increase farm production.

A second event, hosted by Brazil, will focus on food aid to Haiti. U.S. shipments of emergency food aid to the strife-stricken country recently resumed, including food for school and work feeding programs. Fore said May 23 that the United States had increased to \$45 million its 2008 contribution for food aid to Haiti.

The third event will highlight U.S. government partnerships with companies and private foundations to pay for and implement food aid and agricultural development programs.

Schafer said increasing the use of scientifically advanced crops, including those produced through biotechnology, and removing trade barriers and export restrictions will speed progress toward reducing world hunger and stabilizing food markets.

He said other developed nations "have an obligation to provide food efficiently, without obstructing access to it or limiting safe technologies to produce it." A "successful conclusion" of negotiations within

the World Trade Organization would result in a reduction or elimination of barriers and market-distorting agricultural subsidies, he said.

Pointing to some of the benefits of crops produced through biotechnol-



*High-yield crops can help reduce hunger.*

ogy, Schafer cited higher yields, the need for less fertilizer and water and better adaptation to varying soil and climate conditions.

He said U.S. officials also will encourage countries to adopt policies that encourage more investment in other innovations such as water management, improved post-harvest management and agricultural credit.

Schafer will speak at the conference about the international need to move away from dependence on fossil fuels by increasing production in biofuels. He said the International Energy Agency reports that, since 2005, biofuel production has re-

*(Continued on page 22)*

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## Promoting Food Security Worldwide: A U.S. Commitment

**U.S. Department of State  
Bureau of Public Affairs  
Washington, DC  
May 30, 2008**

"We're sending a clear message to the world: that America will lead the fight against hunger for years to come."

– President George W. Bush

The United States is the world's largest food aid donor and has acted quickly to address the rise in global food prices. The U.S. is on track to provide nearly \$5 billion – far more than any other country – to fight global hunger in 2008 and 2009. From 2001-2006 approximately 50 percent of total world food aid came from the United States. Food security is an international issue requiring an international response. The United States is coordinating closely with the United Nations, the G8, the World Bank, and other international partners.

### **Presidential Leadership**

On May 1, President Bush asked Congress for \$770 million to support food aid and development programs. This is in addition to existing food security programs and the estimated \$200 million the President announced on April 14 to combat immediate hunger through a withdrawal from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust.

### **A Three-Pronged Strategy**

Immediate and expanded humanitarian response targeting those countries made most vulnerable to hunger by rising food prices.

Development assistance to those countries most able to rapidly increase staple food production.

### **Targeted Assistance**

The United States' humanitarian assistance will focus on the most vulnerable countries, where food prices have risen sharply, poverty levels are high even as safety nets are weak or nonexistent, and people are highly dependent on food imports.

Efforts to increase food production and increase regional trade of food staples will initially target countries and programs in Africa. These efforts have the potential to:

- Rapidly increase the staple food supply in target countries and in neighboring countries through trade;

- Leverage significant investments from other sources, including the private sector; and

- Use market-based policies and trade incentives to ensure a rapid increase in food supplies.

### **Longer Term Solutions**

Investments in science and technology are essential to increasing the food supply. Key innovations include improved post-harvest management techniques and increased plantings of drought-tolerant crops. Removing barriers to trade in technologically advanced crops, including those produced through biotechnology, will increase agricultural productivity and speed progress in reducing hunger and stabilizing food markets. The U.S. is training the next generation of scientists in Africa who will utilize these technologies by expanding support for its Borlaug and Cochran fellowships.

### **Promoting Trade Reform**

The United States is working to conclude an ambitious agreement in the Doha Round this year that will

increase market access, and reduce tariffs and market-distorting agricultural subsidies to promote increased trade of agricultural goods.

The United States is also encouraging countries to eliminate trade-restrictive measures put into place in response to increased food prices. While these restrictions are designed to increase shortterm food security locally, their effects are overwhelmingly negative. Such policies take food off the global market, driving prices higher.

### **Biofuels Only One Factor**

Increased production of biofuels is but one of many contributing factors to increased food prices, and not the most significant. The United States is investing significantly in the research and development of next generation biofuels that will simultaneously promote food security and energy diversification.

### **Multiple Factors Contribute to Rising Food Prices**

- Large increases in fuel and transportation costs

- Economic growth and increased consumer demand

- Rapid increases in agricultural input prices (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds)

- Low world grain stocks

- Two years of poor harvests in traditional exporting countries

- Export controls and other

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## Global Grain Production Expected to Increase . . .

(Continued from page 16)

In an April speech posted on the American Farm Bureau Federation Web site, Bob Stallman, the association's president, stressed that renewable fuel and affordable food "can coexist."

He said Farm Bureau analysis of the costs of food production and marketing shows petroleum-based energy is the primary factor driving domestic food prices.

### **MORE NEEDED TO SHORE UP DEPLETED STOCKS**

Meeting the future global demand for food is being further challenged by the decline in world grain buffer stocks. Wheat stocks are at their lowest level since 1977, and maize stocks are at their lowest since 1983, CRS reports.

Governments deemed these stocks less important following several years of low and stable prices. The private sector reduced stocks to save money when global supplies were readily available, Trostle said.

Aid agencies are focusing more attention on boosting agricultural productivity in low-income countries.

Schafer said the United States needs to convince other nations to focus more on increasing yields through the use of biotechnology, better water and fertilizer management and more precise farming methods.

Some analysts say governments can take other steps to help. They argue, for instance, that countries with export restrictions can lift those barriers so more food is available to those in need.

Others suggest that land set aside for conservation and other uses could be brought into agricultural production.

A transcript ( [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/nr/ut/p/\\_s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_1OB?contentonly=true&contentid=2008/05/0130.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/nr/ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1OB?contentonly=true&contentid=2008/05/0130.xml) ) of Schafer's press briefing is available on USDA's Web site.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*

## Reducing Demand Is Key To Curbing Human Trafficking, . . .

(Continued from page 11)

ernmental organizations. In fiscal year 2007, the U.S. government spent approximately \$79 million to fund 180 anti-trafficking projects in about 90 countries. Since fiscal year 2001, the United States has funded more than \$528 million for anti-trafficking projects worldwide.

Even though the problem of human trafficking is severe, the outlook is not entirely gloomy. According to Rice, in recent years there has been "a hopeful global movement uniting civil society, governments, and international organizations" to abolish human trafficking.

"We hope this report encourages responsible nations across the globe to stand together, to speak with one voice, and to say that freedom and security are non-negotiable demands of human dignity," she said.

"Together I believe this movement of governments, civil society, and brave individuals of conscience can rescue, rehabilitate, and restore the lives of those who have been treated as less than human."

The full text of the 2008 Trafficking in Persons Report ( <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/> ) is available on the

State Department Web site. See also U.S. Government Efforts to Fight Demand Fueling Human Trafficking ( <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/fs/08/100208.htm> ) and The Facts About Human Trafficking for Forced Labor ( <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/fs/2005/50861.htm> ) also on the State Department Web site.

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## Peacekeeping Initiative Aims to Meet Growing Demand

**By Merle Kellerhals**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Confronted with a shortage of capable peacekeepers and a limited ability to train soldiers and special police units for peace operations amid increasing demand, the United States and its Group of Eight (G8) partners agreed to a plan to meet the demand. The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) is the United States' effort to meet



*U.S. Army soldiers participate in a peacekeeping training exercise in Sri Lanka. (© AP Images)*

the commitments in that plan.

An increase in the number of peacekeeping operations -- from four in 1988 to 20 in 2008 -- has resulted in a corresponding demand for peacekeepers; at the same time, fewer trained, equipped and effective forces have been available to respond.

In recognition of these challenges, President Bush announced the crea-

tion of GPOI in April 2004. "It provides \$660 million over five years to train 75,000 peacekeepers worldwide, with a focus on Africa," said Assistant Secretary of State Jendayi Frazer. The African focus reflects the sizeable percentage of peacekeeping missions that are needed there, she said.

Through April 2008, the initiative has trained 39,518 military personnel from 43 countries in peacekeeping duties. This includes 2,719 soldiers trained as peacekeeping trainers.

The GPOI training program is conducted at 18 peace operations training centers in Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Near East, South and Central Asia, and Latin America.

State officials say that 33,590 of the 39,518 peacekeepers trained through GPOI have deployed to 18 peacekeeping operations to date -- in such places as southern Sudan, Darfur, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Somalia, Western Sahara, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Solomon Islands, and the Central African Republic.

An additional aspect of the initiative is to build sustainment and self-sufficiency capabilities in each GPOI partner country so it can, over the long term, prepare its own forces for peacekeeping operations, said Michael Larmas Smith, the GPOI program director in the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. The bureau has overall management responsibility for the program.

Besides helping to train peacekeepers, the initiative also is designed to provide transportation and logistics to support peacekeeping forces, Smith said.

The transportation and logistics support arrangement (TLSA) helps provide transportation for deploying peacekeepers, especially for nations that don't have that capability, and logistics support to sustain those units while they are in the field, Smith said. It was created in 2007, and five of the eight members of the G8 currently provide points of contact to assess potential TLSA requests.

Other peace operations personnel in short supply are stability police. Stability Police Units (SPUs) are gendarme-like or constabulary-like forces that fill the gap between military peacekeeping and traditional policing duties. Through GPOI, the United States has provided support to the Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units (COESPU), an international center in Vicenza, Italy, that trains stability police trainers from around the world.

The G8 major industrialized nations -- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States -- began recognizing the challenges to peace operations in early 2002, and in 2004 drafted a plan to manage the rising demand.

At the 2004 G8 Sea Island Summit in the United States, the group adopted the "Sea Island Action Plan." In the Sea Island Action Plan, G8 countries committed to train and equip 75,000 peacekeepers worldwide by 2010, create a

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## Multiple Factors Drive Up Global Food . . .

(Continued from page 17)

mand for biofuels, which has reduced the availability of agricultural products for food and feed use.

U.S. government subsidies for ethanol production, which uses corn as a feedstock, have prompted many U.S. farmers to switch their production from food use to biofuel use. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that 23 percent of the corn crops went into ethanol production in 2006-2007 and predicts the figure will rise to 50 percent in 2007-2008.

"Some think that the competition between crops for food and crops for fuel will affect food supply and prices for years into the future," Hanrahan said. "This issue is hotly debated right now."

In April, World Bank President Robert Zoellick said the food situation is getting worse by the day in many developing countries, where the poor spend up to 75 percent of their income on food. He warned that 33 nations are in danger of social unrest because of the rising cost of food.

Hanrahan said the price of wheat has dropped by roughly 30 percent in the past month and the price of rice will decline in the near future.

"Prices will come down, but they will be higher than they were a year or two years ago" because of long-term structural changes, Hanrahan said.

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## U.S. Officials to Urge Increased Agriculture . . .

(Continued from page 18)

duced consumption of crude oil by 1 billion barrels a day.

Rising energy costs, which contribute to rising food costs, he said, can be lessened by biofuel production in major grain-producing countries. But others disagree. (See "Multiple Factors Drive up Global Food Prices ( <http://www.america.gov/st/econ-english/2008/May/20080530132531cpataruk0.4886286.html?CP.rss=true> ).")

The United States contributes more than half of the world's food assistance and is on track to provide a total of nearly \$5 billion in food aid in 2008 and 2009, Fore said.

A transcript ( [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/\\_s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/05/0140.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/05/0140.xml) ) of the briefing and the



*The United States invests in research to develop improved crop varieties. (USDA)*

press release ( file:///\\00PDFS3\\Shared\\Press\\ES\\exam\\Schafer said

the U.S. delegation also will encourage countries to adopt policies that would encourage more investment in such innovations as water management, fertilizer and seed market-

ing, agricultural credit and improved post-harvest management. ) are available on USDA's Web site.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*

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## U.S. Intelligence Official Reports Major Gains Against Al-Qaida

**By David McKeeby**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- Al-Qaida essentially has lost in Iraq and Saudi Arabia and continues losing ground elsewhere thanks to strengthening global counterterrorism partnerships and an increasing number of Islamic scholars and former militants who publicly are repudiating the terrorist group's legitimacy, says Central Intelligence Agency Director Michael Hayden.

"On balance, we are doing pretty well," Hayden told the Washington Post in a rare public interview May 30. "Near strategic defeat of al-Qaida in Iraq. Near strategic defeat for al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia. Significant setbacks for al-Qaida globally - - and here I'm going to use the word 'ideologically' -- as a lot of the Islamic world pushes back on their form of Islam."

While al-Qaida remains a serious threat, Hayden said, stepped-up intelligence sharing and worldwide operations continue to keep the terrorists off balance, even in the Afghan-Pakistan border region, where experts believe the group has been rebuilding its organization and where it is believed that leaders Osama bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, remain in hiding.

In Iraq, al-Qaida's steady series of attacks against civilians in 2005 and 2006 betrayed its false claims of acting on behalf of Iraq's minority Sunni community, which also is a frequent terrorist target.

"Despite this 'cause célèbre' phenomenon, fundamentally no one really liked al-Qaida's vision of the future," Hayden said. That is a key factor contributing to better security conditions in Iraq, he said.



*CIA Director Michael Hayden  
(© AP Images)*

major blow against al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia, security services arrested 28 militants in Mecca, Medina and Riyadh who were planning to attack pilgrims gathered for the Hajj and religious leaders critical of the terrorist group.

"One of the lessons we can draw from the past two years is that al-Qaida is its own worst enemy," Robert Grenier, a former top CIA counterterrorism official, told the Washington Post. "Where they have succeeded initially, they very quickly discredit themselves."

SCHOLARS, FORMER SUPPORTERS CONDEMN "IMMORAL" AL-QAIDA

Opposition to al-Qaida's tactics extends beyond Iraq and Saudi Arabia, say researchers Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank in "The Unraveling: The Jihadist Revolt Against bin Laden," featured in the June 2008 issue of The New Republic magazine.

"Al-Qaida and its affiliates have killed thousands of Muslim civilians elsewhere since September 11: hundreds of ordinary Afghans killed every year by the Taliban, dozens of Saudis killed by terrorists since 2003, scores of Jordanians massacred at a wedding at a U.S. hotel in Amman in November 2005," write Bergen and Cruickshank. "All this has created a dawning recognition among Muslims that the ideological virus that unleashed September 11 and the terrorist attacks in London and Madrid [Spain] is the same virus now wreaking havoc in the Muslim world."

"How much blood has been spilt?" asked Sheikh Salman Al Oudah, a world-renowned Saudi religious scholar who bin Laden has claimed as an influence. "How many innocent people, children, elderly and women have been killed ... in the name of al-Qaida?"

Two months later, Noman Benotman, a former Libyan militant leader who fought beside bin Laden in Afghanistan, published an open letter to al-Qaida urging the group to end

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## Peacekeeping Initiative Aims to Meet Growing . . .

*(Continued from page 21)*

clearinghouse for exchanging information, develop a transportation and logistics support arrangement, and support an international training center for gendarme-like units to support peace operations.

Bush discussed the concept of the initiative in his September 21, 2004, address at the opening of the

59th session of the U.N. General Assembly, saying that the world "must create permanent capabilities to respond to future crises." In particular, the president highlighted the need for "more effective means to stabilize regions in turmoil, and to halt religious violence and ethnic cleansing."

"We're just responding to that need," Smith said. "For example,

we've also helped initiate a Global Clearinghouse, where countries can exchange information and help coordinate efforts to enhance peace operations training and exercises." The first Global Clearinghouse was held in Washington in 2007.

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## U.S. Intelligence Official Reports Major Gains . . .

*(Continued from page 23)*

attacks in the Arab world and the West. The letter became the subject of widespread debate across the Middle East.

In another high-profile criticism, former terrorist leader Sayyid Imam al-Sharif, a close friend and one-time mentor to al-Zawahiri, published a book serialized in Egyptian newspapers repudiating the manipulation of Islamic theology to justify violence.

Al-Sharif, also known as "Dr. Fadl," is the subject of Lawrence Wright's new article "The Rebellion Within: An Al Qaida Mastermind Questions Terrorism," featured in the June 2008 issue of *The New Yorker*.

He studied with al-Zawahiri in Egypt during the 1960s, and the two men founded al Jihad, a terrorist group that became a key component of the future al-Qaida. While he remains a strong critic of the West, al-Sharif also has turned

against the group he helped to shape.

"Zawahiri and his Emir bin Laden [are] extremely immoral," al-Sharif said. "I have spoken about this in order to warn the youth against them, youth who are seduced by them and don't know them."

Amid these renewed debates, surveys indicate that public support for al-Qaida and its tactics continues to decline, say Bergen and Cruickshank, citing rising opposition to suicide bombing in Indonesia, Lebanon and Bangladesh, as well as plummeting rates of people reporting favorable views of al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and elsewhere.

"Encoded in the DNA of apocalyptic jihadist groups like al-Qaida are the seeds of their own long-term destruction," write Bergen and Cruickshank. "Their victims are often Muslim civilians; they don't offer a positive vision of the future (but rather the prospect of Taliban-style

regimes from Morocco to Indonesia); they keep expanding their list of enemies, including any Muslim who doesn't precisely share their world view."

But while similar debates have led other terrorist groups such as the Irish Republican Army or the Red Army Faction to abandon violence, other experts caution against expecting the same from al-Qaida.

"Al-Qaida's obituary has been written far too often in the past few years for anyone to declare victory," said Bruce Hoffman, a terrorism expert at Georgetown University. "I agree that there has been progress. But we're indisputably up against a very resilient and implacable enemy."

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)♦*



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## World Environment Day Urges “Kick the Carbon Habit”

**By Lea Terhune**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** -- When World Environment Day was inaugurated by the U.N. General Assembly in 1972, few realized how critical an issue the environment still would be three decades later.

“Climate change is becoming the defining issue of our era,” according to the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP), and for that reason the emphasis for 2008 is promoting ways to live sustainably and stop practices that contribute to climate change.

“Our world is in the grip of a dangerous carbon habit,” U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message introducing the theme, “Kick the carbon habit: toward a low carbon economy.”

“The environmental, economic and political implications of global warming are profound,” Ban said, citing the rapid changes “from mountain to ocean, from the poles to the tropics” documented by the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC concluded that human activity is likely a major contributing factor to climate change and global warming. (See “U.S. Officials Praise Climate Change Report ( <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/February/20070202172320mlenuhret0.302807.html> ).”)

“Low-lying cities face inundation, fertile lands are turning to desert” and unpredictable weather patterns exacerbate soaring prices for staple foods and increase the likelihood of

conflict over diminishing resources, he said.

“The poor will be hardest hit,” Ban said, reiterating “the damaging effect of our addiction” to burning carbon through fossil fuels and unsustainable manufacturing practices. Rampant deforestation also contributes significantly to global warming, he said.

The effect already is being felt by human populations and plant and animal species in vulnerable regions worldwide. In some of these regions, flora and fauna are being exploited to extinction by criminal traffickers in endangered species.

For that reason, to coincide with World Environment Day, the U.S. State Department is launching an initiative to raise public awareness about fighting illegal wildlife trafficking. Public service announcements by actor Harrison Ford, who donated his time, will highlight this global campaign.

### **U.S. BUSINESSES, COMMUNITIES PLEDGE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION CUTS**

On greenhouse gas reduction, pledges solicited in March at the Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC) are being implemented by communities, countries and businesses internationally. These commitments to reduce use of carbon-based fuels in favor of renewable energy sources and to minimize detrimental practices support the drive to “kick the carbon habit.” To date, 140 pledges have been vetted and listed on the REN21 Web site. (See “Social Entrepreneurs Target Climate Change

( <http://www.america.gov/st/env-english/2008/April/20080428170018mlenuhret0.295727.html> ).”)

Ambassador Reno L. Harnish III, principal deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, told America.gov that WIREC “gave a strong impulse to low-carbon societies around the world.”

The WIREC pledges, being analyzed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado, are significant. “We can see already that the pledges taken together” will prevent the release of vast amounts of greenhouse gases. Harnish added, “It is edifying to see the number of pledges from developing countries, from Cape Verde to Nicaragua to Jordan. These countries clearly are moving in their own way toward a low-carbon society.

“The United States supports the movement toward a low-carbon society domestically and abroad,” he said, through targeted legislation in the United States and programs such as the Asia Pacific Partnership and the Global Village Partnership abroad. Besides reducing the carbon footprint, “these programs also provide energy security and rural development to developing countries,” Hamish said.

He said the 17-nation Major Economies process aims at negotiating “to achieve a credible long-term goal and a binding medium-term goal.”

Big businesses are making a difference as more jump on the green

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## Passion for Protecting Amazon Basin Unites Leaders, Activists

**By Melissa Martinez**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** – A common passion for protecting the Amazon Basin brought leaders of indigenous people, government officials, representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and private donors to a Virginia suburb of Washington May 5-9.

The 2008 Amazon Alliance Steering Council Meeting met to address pressing concerns such as climate change and the rights of indigenous peoples. Participants discussed environmental concerns affecting the Amazon, and stressed the basin's importance as one of the planet's key ecosystems and the role of indigenous peoples as its stewards.

"The Amazon region is central to the functioning of the earth. Indigenous peoples are the ones who are protecting the earth and with that, protecting the health of everyone," said Trevor Stevenson, co-director of the Amazon Alliance.

The U.S.-based Amazon Alliance, a nonprofit organization founded in 1990 to address the crisis of environmental degradation and cultural loss throughout the Amazon Basin, coordinates the work of nearly 100 indigenous organizations and allied NGOs across the Americas. The organization is led by a steering council that consists of representatives of nine indigenous organizations and nine allied NGOs.

Officials from Peru, Guyana, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, French Guiana, and Suriname also participated in the May meeting, along with representatives from

the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"Our fight for environmental protection has had a variety of participants on the national and international levels," said Jorge Gabriel Furagaro, president of the Organization of the Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC).



*Indigenous peoples, like these on their way to protest building a dam, strongly support preservation of the Amazon Basin. Photo: Benjamin Arseguet*

"We come together to listen and learn from each other. There are problems in the Amazon because we have fuel, clean water, and minerals. We have the natural resources to feed the appetites of international companies," Furagaro said.

Juan Carlos Jintiach, executive co-director of the Amazon Alliance and indigenous representative of the Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin

(COICA) outlined his goals.

"My dream was to be elected as co-director in order to show that there are people alive in the Amazon; that there are different people and different customs. I wanted to ensure that these people's voices were heard; to show that we have voices and rights, and that our voices are

heard by the international systems that exist," said Jintiach, who is originally from a small indigenous community in Ecuador called Shuar.

### COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION

The Amazon Alliance stresses the need for effective communication among all participants in the Amazonian movement. On May 8, a special session of the Steering Council Meeting was held for do-

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## World Environment Day Urges “Kick the Carbon . . .

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bandwagon. An example is Wal-Mart, ranked America's largest corporation on the 2008 Fortune 500 list. UNEP commended it for its success in cutting excess toy packaging, making a noteworthy contribution to carbon-emissions reduction by saving trees and for transport fuel expenditures. Since 2005 Wal-Mart has introduced eco-friendly practices in its operations, drafting innovators like Rocky Mountain Institute co-founder Amory Lovins to help.

Wal-Mart works with several certifying agencies like the Forestry Stewardship Council and the Marine Stewardship Council to ensure sus-

tainability of certain products. But Wal-Mart's self-acknowledged uneven success in going green still attracts criticism from some environmental groups, who say sustainability gains in one area frequently are negated by the company's other practices.

A U.S. leader in kicking the carbon habit is the Department of Defense, which pledged to replace 25 percent of its fossil fuel use with renewable energy sources.

“The Pentagon is an emerging leader within the federal government in getting this country off of oil,” Amory Lovins said in a recent Popular Mechanics magazine interview.

Individuals, organizations, communities and governments are urged to become energy conscious and take direct action to develop energy-efficient lifestyles that incorporate alternative energy sources, natural resource conservation and eco-friendly consumption.

For more information, see World Environment Day 2008 ( <http://www.unep.org/wed/2008/english/> ) on the U.N. Environment Programme's Web site.

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## Passion for Protecting Amazon Basin Unites Leaders, . . .

(Continued from page 26)

nors (funders) who work in the region. “The Funders Dialogue: Renewing Our Natural Partnership” was an all-day session in which donors and indigenous leaders developed a working document on improving collaboration.

“The goal is to improve our relationship now and into the future. This is not the end but rather another step in the dialogue that will continue,” said Stephen Cornelius, acting director of the MacArthur Foundation's biodiversity program.

Participants emphasized the impor-

tance of sharing a common strategy and commitment to change across the Western Hemisphere.

“If there is commitment, we can find a way to make things happen. It comes down to commitment and taking our principles to heart,” said Janis Alcorn of the Garfield Foundation.

The Amazon Alliance Steering Council plans to host a public meeting in the Amazon Basin in spring 2009. Climate change, indigenous rights, threats to the health of Amazonian ecosystems will be the major discussion themes.

“We have to remember that we can work together for the common good of saving this planet, said Jintiaich. “We have done a lot of damage to our earth and it is time to act.”

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**Nations with Influence on Zimbabwe Must Use . . .**

*(Continued from page 5)*

"callous indifference" to its people, which could lead to "government-induced starvation in Zimbabwe." (See "Zimbabwe Suspends CARE Operations, Leaving 110,000 Without Food ( <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/June/20080603162747esnamfuak0.4258539.html?CP.rss=true> ).")

Under Mugabe's 20-year rule, Zimbabwe has transformed from being a food exporter to becoming reliant on international assistance to feed its people. A high rate of inflation and shortages of basic commodities such as cooking oil and cornmeal have left many, especially in rural areas, dependent on the activities of the aid agencies.

Cephas Zinhumwe, chief executive of Zimbabwe's National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO), told Agence France Presse June 4 that the aid organizations had been accused of campaigning for the opposition, a charge the agencies have denied.

"If we continue like this, we are going to have a crisis," Zinhumwe said.

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**Americans Feeling Effects of Higher Oil, . . .**

*(Continued from page 13)*

Congress recently passed legislation to halt filling the national Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a law it says will increase supply. The reserve, the world's largest supply of emergency oil, is reportedly 97 percent full.

President Bush, despite his criticism that the legislation will not have an effect on gas prices, signed the bill into law. Filling of the reserve will not resume until oil prices stay at or below \$75 per barrel for at least 90 days.

The House of Representatives recently passed a bill calling on the Justice Department to sue the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for limiting sup-

plies and collaborating to set prices. The Senate has not yet voted on the measure. Bush has threatened to veto the legislation, saying it would spur retaliatory action against the United States. Two-thirds of the House and Senate must vote to override a president's veto for a vetoed bill to become law.

Even though leaders from both parties helped pass this legislation, Republicans and Democrats disagree on other ways to solve the problem.

Some Democrats propose imposing a new tax on certain profits earned by the five biggest U.S. oil companies unless they use the profits to expand their refineries or develop alternative fuels. Some

propose a federal law preventing price gouging, although such laws exist in many states. Opponents say it is unlikely these measures would have any serious effect on prices.

Some Republicans want to allow drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and off the coasts of American shores where drilling currently is prohibited. Opponents say that drilling in these areas will cause environmental damages and would not provide any oil for at least 10 years.

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